

Amendments to the Drawings

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes to Figures 2, 3, 4 and 5. Reference numbers for existing shown items 1", 12', 16", 16"', 17", 19', and 30' have been added. Axes 31 and 5' were also added. No substantive changes were made and thus it is believed that no new matter was added.

Attachment: Replacement sheets 2 of 4, and 3 of 4.
Annotated Sheets showing changes.

REMARKS

1. STATUS OF THE CLAIMS

Claims 1 – 10 have been cancelled and claims 11 – 21 are pending.

Claims 11, 14, 16, 17, and 20 have been amended, new claim 21 added.

The specification was amended to further clarify in view of the original English translation of the application. The amendments to the specification are believed to be self explanatory and based on the original specification, claims and drawings as originally filed. The amendments to paragraph 0022 include the addition of “abutment 17” which element is shown in the original drawings as now described and which appears in original claim 1. The terminology regarding the “locking engagement” was rewritten to be more clear and is fully supported by the original drawings and description. The last section of paragraph 0022 was added to rephrase the specification and describe the drawings. This is supported by the original claims, drawings and specification.

The drawings were amended to add reference numbers to identify elements in the drawings, and to add axes 5' and 31. No new elements were added and thus no new matter is believed to be added.

The amendments to claim 11 are supported by original claim 4 and Fig. 2 in addition to the specification. New claim 21 is supported by original claim 1 and 4 and the original drawings.

2. OBJECTIONS TO THE DRAWINGS

The drawing were objected to as failing to comply with 37 C.F.R. § 1.83(a). More specifically, the Office asserts that the claimed element “inclined pivot axis” is not shown in the drawings. The inclined pivot axis is provided by

the guide mandrel 11 as shown in Fig. 4. Paragraph 0022 of the specification and Figure 3 have been amended to specifically show the inclined pivot axis 11'.

The Office further alleges that the drawings fail to show elements 14 and 19' as described in the specification. Again, these elements are shown in the drawings, but are now identified in the replacement drawings with specific reference numerals.

3. OBJECTIONS TO THE ABSTRACT

The Office has objected to the abstract as being more than 150 words in length. In response, an amended abstract having less than 150 words has been provided.

4. CLAIM OBJECTIONS

The Office has objected to claim 11 as lacking proper support in the specification for the claimed element "topside". Paragraph 0018 has been amended to add reference numeral 1' for the "topside". Fig 2 has likewise been amended.

The Office has also objected to claim 11 as lacking proper support in the specification for the claimed element "counter surface". Reference to the counter surface (12') has been added to paragraph 0022, and suitable amendment to Fig. 3 has been made.

In addition, claim 11 has been objected to as having a redundant phrase, i.e., "the support disk being connected to the floating body" at lines 14 – 15. This redundancy was deleted.

5. INDEFINITENESS REJECTIONS

Claim 11 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 2nd paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter regarded as the invention. In particular, the Office asserts that the claimed element "axial extension" lacks proper antecedent basis. Claims 11 has been amended to overcome this rejection.

The Office also alleges that the element “positive locking abutment” is indefinite because it is unclear how the abutment locks the surfaces together. Clarifying amendments have been made. The amendment is fully supported by Fig. 4 and the specification.

6. ANTICIPATION REJECTIONS

Claims 11 – 20 have been rejected as being anticipated by Mills, et al. (US 5,960,816). Claim 11 as amended is believed patentable. To anticipate a claimed invention, a reference must disclose each and every element of the invention. Mills does not.

Claim 11 is directed to a bleed valve having a sealing element (15) moveable according to movement of the floating body to close the outlet orifice of the valve, see, e.g., Fig. 3. As claimed, the sealing element includes a projection (16) forming a fluid conduit extending from the sealing element towards the floating body. The fluid conduit has an open end (16') facing the floating body. As seen in Fig. 2, a mandrel (11) is fixedly attached to an end of the floating body facing the valve seat. This mandrel is configured to close the fluid conduit open end (16'') when the valve is in the closed position, i.e. to sealingly engage the open end (16'') and close it.

The Mills reference does not have the above noted features. Specifically, Mills does not have a mandrel fixedly attached to the floating body and which is configured to close the fluid conduit open end of a projection of the sealing element. In fact, in Mills, the opening of a fluid conduit in the sealing element 18c is closed by the secondary valve element 18f which sits on pilot portion 18g. Moreover, secondary valve element 18f is not fixedly attached to the float as it can move relative to the float – see Figs 9 and 10 of Mills. Mills works in a very different manner and does not include all claim limitations of claim 11, and thus cannot anticipate claim 11. Claim 11 is believed patentable.

Claims 12 to 20 depend from claim 11 and are likewise believed patentable. Moreover, claim 14 includes additional limitations such as a centrally positioned opening in the support disk through which the fluid conduit of

the sealing disc extends, and a conically shaped mandrel for sealingly closing the fluid conduit. These additional limitations are not disclosed in Mills.

New independent claim 21 is for a bleed valve having “a sealing element moveable in response to movement of said floating body . . . said sealing element having a fluid conduit formed within a projection extending from said sealing element towards said floating body, said fluid conduit having an open end facing said floating body; a guide mandrel attached to an end of the floating body facing said valve seat for movement with said floating body, said guide mandrel being configured to close said fluid conduit opening when said valve is in the closed position, said sealing element fluid conduit extending towards said mandrel such that said mandrel is capable of sealingly engaging said open end of said fluid conduit and urging said sealing element against said valve seat when said valve is in the closed position, . . . a support disc connected to said floating body, the support disc having an integral ~~annular~~ annular flange and an opening formed therein, said support disk being mounted for pivotal movement about mutually perpendicular pivot axes, said projection of said sealing element extending through said support disc opening to said mandrel”. At least these underlined elements are missing from Mills, the Mills reference functioning differently as discussed above. Accordingly, new claim 21 is believed patentable over Mills.

7. CONCLUSION

This Reply is believed to be fully responsive to the pending Office Action. In view of the remarks above as well as the proposed amendments to the claims, specification, and drawings, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to contact the

undersigned counsel in order to further the prosecution of this application in any way.

Respectfully submitted,

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